

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A bracket assembly for use with a spring tension rod for hanging window coverings, the bracket assembly comprising:

a mounting section defining a bearing surface facing in a first direction; and
a rod interface coupled to the mounting section and facing in a second direction generally opposite the first direction, the rod interface adapted to connect with one end of a spring tension rod,

wherein the rod interface is arranged relative to the bearing surface to position the rod interface spaced away from a window opening in a direction generally perpendicular to the first and second directions when the bearing surface is borne against a surface of the window opening; and

wherein the mounting brackets are rotationally aligned with one another about the rod axis and the bearing surfaces of the respective mounting brackets face generally outwardly opposite one another and flex inward to bear substantially flush against opposed surfaces of a window opening when the tension rod is installed.

2. (Original) A bracket assembly according to claim 1, further comprising:
an elbow section coupled to the mounting section and defining the rod interface.

3. (Original) A bracket assembly according to claim 2, wherein the mounting section and the elbow section are separate parts.

4. (Currently Amended) A bracket assembly ~~according to claim 3, wherein for~~ use with a spring tension rod for hanging window coverings, the bracket assembly comprising:

a mounting section defining a bearing surface facing in a first direction; and
a rod interface coupled to the mounting section and facing in a second direction generally opposite the first direction, the rod interface adapted to connect with one end of a spring tension rod,

wherein the rod interface is arranged relative to the bearing surface to position the rod interface spaced away from a window opening in a direction generally perpendicular to the first and second directions when the bearing surface is borne against a surface of the window opening;

an elbow section coupled to the mounting section and defining the rod interface;
wherein the mounting section and the elbow section are separate parts; and
wherein the mounting section has a male attachment mechanism received in a female receptacle end of the elbow section.

5. (Original) A bracket assembly according to claim 4, wherein a snap detent feature is provided between the attachment mechanism and the receptacle end.

6. (Original) A bracket assembly according to claim 2, wherein the mounting section and the elbow section are integrally formed as a one-piece structure.

7. (Original) A bracket assembly according to claim 1, wherein the mounting section further comprises:

an anti-rotation tab extending outwardly in the first direction relative to the bearing surface and generally perpendicular to the bearing surface, the tab positioned to prevent downward rotation of the spring tension rod when installed.

8. (Currently Amended) A bracket assembly ~~according to claim 1, wherein the mounting section further comprises:~~ for use with a spring tension rod for hanging window coverings, the bracket assembly comprising:

a mounting section defining a bearing surface facing in a first direction; and
a rod interface coupled to the mounting section and facing in a second direction generally opposite the first direction, the rod interface adapted to connect with one end of a spring tension rod,

wherein the rod interface is arranged relative to the bearing surface to position the rod interface spaced away from a window opening in a direction generally perpendicular to the first and second directions when the bearing surface is borne against a surface of the window opening; and

a sharp pointed tang extending outwardly in the first direction relative to the bearing surface and generally perpendicular to the bearing surface.

9. (Currently Amended) A hardware assembly for mounting window coverings, the hardware assembly comprising:

a spring tension rod having a pair of opposite rod ends and a longitudinal rod axis;
and

a pair of mounting brackets, one each coupled to one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod, each of the mounting brackets including[.]:

a rod interface connected to a respective one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod; and

a bearing surface coupled to the rod interface and extending radially outward relative to the rod axis, and

~~wherein the mounting brackets are rotationally aligned with one another about the rod axis~~ connect to the rod interface at an inwardly biased angle, and wherein the bearing surfaces of the respective mounting brackets face generally outwardly opposite one another to bear against opposed surfaces of a window opening.

10. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 9, wherein the spring tension rod is length adjustable.

11. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 9, wherein each rod interface is provided on a corresponding elbow section of each mounting bracket.

12. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 11, wherein each bearing surface is provided on a corresponding mounting section of each mounting bracket.

13. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 12, wherein the elbow section and mounting section of each mounting bracket are discrete parts assembled to one another.

14. (Currently Amended) A hardware assembly ~~according to claim 13, for mounting window coverings, the hardware assembly comprising:~~

a spring tension rod having a pair of opposite rod ends and a longitudinal rod axis;
a pair of mounting brackets, one each coupled to one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod, each of the mounting brackets including,

a rod interface connected to a respective one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod;

a bearing surface coupled to the rod interface and extending radially outward relative to the rod axis,

wherein the mounting brackets are rotationally aligned with one another about the rod axis, and wherein the bearing surfaces of the respective mounting brackets face generally outwardly opposite one another to bear against opposed surfaces of a window opening;

wherein each rod interface is provided on a corresponding elbow section of each mounting bracket;

wherein each bearing surface is provided on a corresponding mounting section of each mounting bracket;

wherein the elbow section and mounting section of each mounting bracket are discrete parts assembled to one another; and

wherein the mounting section of each mounting bracket includes a male attaching mechanism received in a female receptacle of the respective elbow section.

15. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 13, wherein the elbow section and the mounting section of each mounting bracket in combination include a snap-in detent when assembled.

16. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 9, further comprising:
at least one anti-rotation tab positioned adjacent the bearing surface of each mounting bracket, each anti-rotation tab extending generally perpendicular to and in the facing direction of its respective bearing surface.

17. (Currently Amended) A hardware assembly ~~according to claim 9, further~~ comprising:

a spring tension rod having a pair of opposite rod ends and a longitudinal rod axis;
a pair of mounting brackets, one each coupled to one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod, each of the mounting brackets including a rod interface connected to a respective one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod and a bearing surface coupled to the rod interface and extending radially outward relative to the rod axis,

wherein the mounting brackets are rotationally aligned with one another about the rod axis, and wherein the bearing surfaces of the respective mounting brackets face generally outwardly opposite one another to bear against opposed surfaces of a window opening; and

a sharp pointed embedding tang positioned adjacent the bearing surface of each mounting bracket, each sharp pointed embedding tang extending generally perpendicular to and in the facing direction of its respective bearing surface.

18. (Original) A hardware assembly according to claim 9, further comprising:
a fastener opening provided through a portion of the bearing surfaces of each of the mounting brackets for receiving a fastener when installing each mounting bracket.

19. (Currently Amended) A method of mounting a spring tension rod for hanging window coverings over a window, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a spring tension rod having a rod axis and opposed ends biased away from one another and compressible toward one another;

attaching a pair of mounting brackets, one to each of the opposed ends of the spring tension rod, each of the mounting brackets having a rod interface connected to a respective one of the opposite ends of the spring tension rod, ~~and~~ a bearing surface coupled to the rod interface and extending radially outward relative to the rod axis, and a sharp pointed tang extending from adjacent each of the bearing surfaces and generally perpendicular to the respective bearing surface;

rotationally aligning the pair of mounting brackets with one another about the rod axis;

compressing the spring tension rod opposed ends and mounting brackets toward one another;

placing the bearing surfaces adjacent corresponding opposed and facing surfaces of a window opening with the spring tension rod spaced outward from the window opening; and

releasing the spring tension rod such that the bearing surfaces are borne against the opposed and facing surfaces of the window opening causing each tab to embed in one of the opposed and facing surfaces of the window opening.

20. (Original) A method according to claim 19, further comprising the step of:
length adjusting the spring tension rod at some point prior to the step of compressing.

21. (Original) A method according to claim 19, wherein the step of attaching further includes forming an anti-rotation tab extending from adjacent each of the bearing surfaces and generally perpendicular to the respective bearing surface, and wherein the step of placing further includes positioning each of the anti-rotations tabs borne against a forward facing surface adjacent the window opening.

22. (Cancelled)